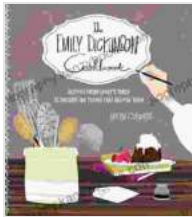


# Taste the Words: The Emily Dickinson Cookbook



## The Emily Dickinson Cookbook: Recipes from Emily's Table Alongside the Poems That Inspire Them

by Arlyn Osborne

★★★★☆ 4.6 out of 5

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Journey into the enigmatic world of Emily Dickinson through the prism of her culinary creations. "The Emily Dickinson Cookbook" offers a delectable exploration of the poet's life and work, revealing her passion for baking, her love of nature, and the subtle yet profound ways in which food influenced her writing.

Within these pages, you'll discover recipes lovingly recreated from Dickinson's own handwritten notes and family recollections. Each dish is a testament to her meticulous attention to detail, her keen observation of the natural world, and her ability to find beauty in the ordinary. These recipes are not merely historical curiosities; they are portals into the mind and heart of one of America's most beloved poets.

## Chapter 1: From the Poet's Kitchen

In this chapter, we step into Emily Dickinson's kitchen, a place where flour danced in the air and the sweet aromas of baking filled the rooms. Through letters, diaries, and family accounts, we learn about her favorite ingredients, her culinary techniques, and the role that food played in her daily life and creative process.

### A Passion for Baking

Emily Dickinson was an avid baker, a skill she likely honed during her time at Mount Holyoke Female Seminary. Baking provided her with a creative outlet, a way to express herself beyond the written word. Her recipes, often noted on scraps of paper or in the margins of her poems, reveal her meticulous attention to detail and her love of experimenting with flavors.

- **Gingerbread:** Dickinson's classic gingerbread recipe, passed down through generations, is a testament to her love of spices and her ability to balance sweetness with a subtle hint of heat.
- **Indian Pudding:** This traditional New England dessert, made with cornmeal, molasses, and spices, was a favorite of Dickinson's. Its comforting flavors and rustic charm embody the simplicity and warmth of her home life.
- **Sourdough Bread:** Dickinson's sourdough bread, made with a starter she likely nurtured for years, speaks to her patience and her appreciation for the slow, natural processes of fermentation.

### Tea Time Delights

Tea time was a sacred ritual for Emily Dickinson, a time to pause, reflect, and savor the simple pleasures of life. Her tea table was laden with an

assortment of homemade treats, including:

- **Fruitcake:** Dickinson's fruitcake, filled with dried fruits, nuts, and spices, was a labor of love that she often gifted to friends and family during the holiday season.
- **Lavender Shortbread:** These delicate cookies, infused with the subtle fragrance of lavender, were a favorite of Dickinson's. Their light, crumbly texture and floral aroma evoke the tranquility of her garden.
- **Lemon Pound Cake:** Dickinson's lemon pound cake, with its moist, dense crumb and bright citrus flavor, is a perfect accompaniment to a cup of tea and a good book.

## Chapter 2: Nature's Bounty on Emily's Plate

Emily Dickinson's deep connection to nature permeated every aspect of her life, including her culinary choices. Her garden was her sanctuary, a place where she found inspiration, peace, and ingredients for her meals.

### Floral Flavors

Dickinson was fascinated by the beauty and diversity of flowers, and she often incorporated them into her cooking. Her recipes feature a range of floral ingredients, each lending its unique flavor and aroma:

- **Rose Petal Jelly:** This delicate jelly, made with fragrant rose petals, captures the essence of Dickinson's beloved rose garden.
- **Lilac Syrup:** Dickinson's lilac syrup, made with the sweet blossoms of lilac bushes, adds a floral touch to pancakes, waffles, and ice cream.

- **Marigold Soup:** This unique soup, made with marigolds and other garden herbs, is a testament to Dickinson's love of experimenting with unusual ingredients.

## Harvest Delights

Dickinson's garden also provided an abundance of fresh fruits and vegetables, which she used to create hearty and flavorful dishes:

- **Apple Pie:** Dickinson's apple pie, made with apples from her own orchard, is a classic dessert that showcases her love of simple, homegrown ingredients.
- **Pumpkin Soup:** This comforting soup, made with fresh pumpkin, spices, and cream, is a nod to Dickinson's New England roots and her appreciation for seasonal flavors.
- **Corn Chowder:** Dickinson's corn chowder, made with sweet corn, potatoes, and bacon, is a hearty and satisfying meal that reflects the bounty of her garden.

## Chapter 3: The Poetry of Food in Emily Dickinson's Writing

Emily Dickinson's passion for food and her keen observation of the natural world found expression in her poetry. Through vivid imagery and evocative language, she transforms everyday culinary experiences into profound reflections on life, death, and the nature of existence.

### Food as Metaphor

In Dickinson's poetry, food often serves as a metaphor for deeper themes:

- **"After the Rain"**: In this poem, Dickinson uses the image of a bird eating crumbs to explore the idea of hope and sustenance in the face of adversity.
- **"The Soul Selects Her Own Society"**: This poem compares the soul to a bee, gathering nectar from different flowers, suggesting the importance of choice and individuality.
- **"Because I could not stop for Death"**: In this famous poem, Dickinson's speaker encounters Death as a gentle host, offering her refreshment and companionship on her journey to the afterlife.

## The Sensuality of Food

Dickinson's poetry also captures the sensual pleasures of food, using vivid language to evoke the textures, flavors, and aromas of culinary delights:

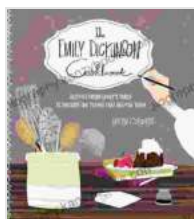
- **"I Taste a Liquor Never Brewed"**: This poem celebrates the intoxicating effects of nature, using the metaphor of wine to describe the transformative power of beauty.
- **"There is a Certain Slant of Light"**: In this poem, Dickinson captures the bittersweet flavors of autumn, using the image of a "nuttid sweetness" to evoke the season's transition.
- **"A Bird came down the Walk"**: This poem describes a bird eating fruit from a tree, using vivid imagery to convey the bird's delight and the abundance of nature.

## Epilogue: A Culinary Legacy

"The Emily Dickinson Cookbook" is more than just a collection of recipes; it is a journey into the mind and heart of one of America's most beloved

poets. Through her culinary creations, we gain a deeper understanding of her passions, her relationship with nature, and the profound ways in which food influenced her writing. As we savor these dishes, we taste the words of Emily Dickinson, finding nourishment not only for our bodies but also for our souls.

Whether you are a seasoned cook, a lover of poetry, or simply someone who appreciates the beauty of food, "The Emily Dickinson Cookbook" offers a unique and unforgettable culinary experience. By exploring the flavors that inspired one of our greatest poets, we can gain a fresh perspective on her work and on the power of food to connect us to our senses, our emotions, and the world around us.



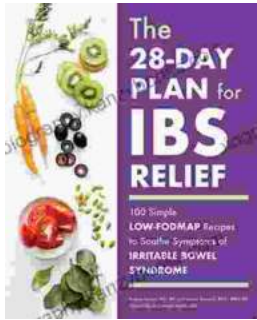
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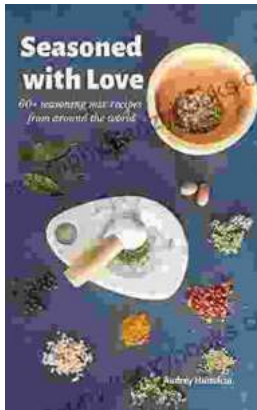
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